



Levy County 2050 Plan Update Workshop #5 - Intergovernmental Coordination & Public Schools

Community-Driven Planning for a Resilient, Thriving Future

February 17, 2026



Purpose of today's Workshop



Formalizing Partnerships: Moving from "informal" city-county talk to formal **Joint Planning Areas (JPAs)** and **Interlocal Agreements**.



Smart Growth Tools: Validating the use of MSAs and JPAs to ensure Infrastructure and Schools keep up with growth and development.



Closing the Capacity Gap: Addressing the projected 98% school utilization rate through the 2050 planning horizon.



The Consistency Requirement: Fixing inconsistencies between the County Comprehensive Plan and the School Board's Work Plan.

Goal for Today: Gather your feedback on these tools to ensure growth pays for itself without overcrowding our classrooms.

The Planning Challenge: Capacity & Coordination



Population is projected to reach ~54,000 by 2050, but the District is planning for zero new permanent stations (average class size of 22).



With 11% of students already in portables and utilization approaching 98%, the "fallback" options are diminishing.



96.6% of Levy is unincorporated, yet students attend schools mostly in cities. How do we sync City, County, and School Board plans? The district and county are currently "not consistent" on paper.

Source: Levy County School District Department of Education website. 2023-2024 District Facilities Work Program from the Florida, the current 5-year facilities plan submitted by the School Board and approved in late 2023.

Unincorporated Land Use Distribution

Future Land Use Category	Acreage	Percentage	Density (Units/Acre)
Natural Resources and Conservation (NR-CON)	123,767	18.0%	0
Forestry/Rural Residential (F/RR)	291,888	42.4%	1U/20 acres
Agricultural/Rural Residential (A/RR)	223,130	32.4%	1U/10 acres
Rural Residential (RR)	27,127	4.0%	1U/3 acres
Urban Low-Density Residential (LDR)	12,920	1.9%	1U/1 acre
Urban Medium Density Residential (MDR)	1,281	0.2%	5U/1 acre
Commercial (C)	2,226	0.32%	N/A
Industrial (I)	629.66	0.09%	N/A
Recreation (REC)	160	0.02%	0
Public & Institutional Facilities (PF)	4,364	0.64%	0

Unincorporated Land Use Distribution

Future Land Use + vacant land

Unincorporated acreage is dominated by:

- **Forestry/Rural Residential - F/RR – 42.4% (1 du/20 acres)**
- **Agricultural/Rural Residential A/RR – 32.4% (1 du/10 acres)**
- **Natural Resource/Conservation NNR-CON – 18% (0 du/acre)**

These districts collectively cover ~93% of unincorporated acreage



Intergovernmental Coordination: Why it Matters

Levy County is 96.6% unincorporated land.

Most of the water/sewer infrastructure is in the cities

Growth in cities (Chiefland, Williston, Bronson) impacts the County and vice versa.

Goal: Efficiently deliver services (Water/Sewer/Schools) through shared planning boundaries.



The Coordination Toolkit

Joint Planning Areas (JPAs): Jointly governed land use/annexation (Primary tool for growth centers).

Municipal Service Areas (MSAs): Utility-led infrastructure zones (Supplemental tool for sewer/water).

Interlocal Agreements: The legal "contracts" that make these tools work.

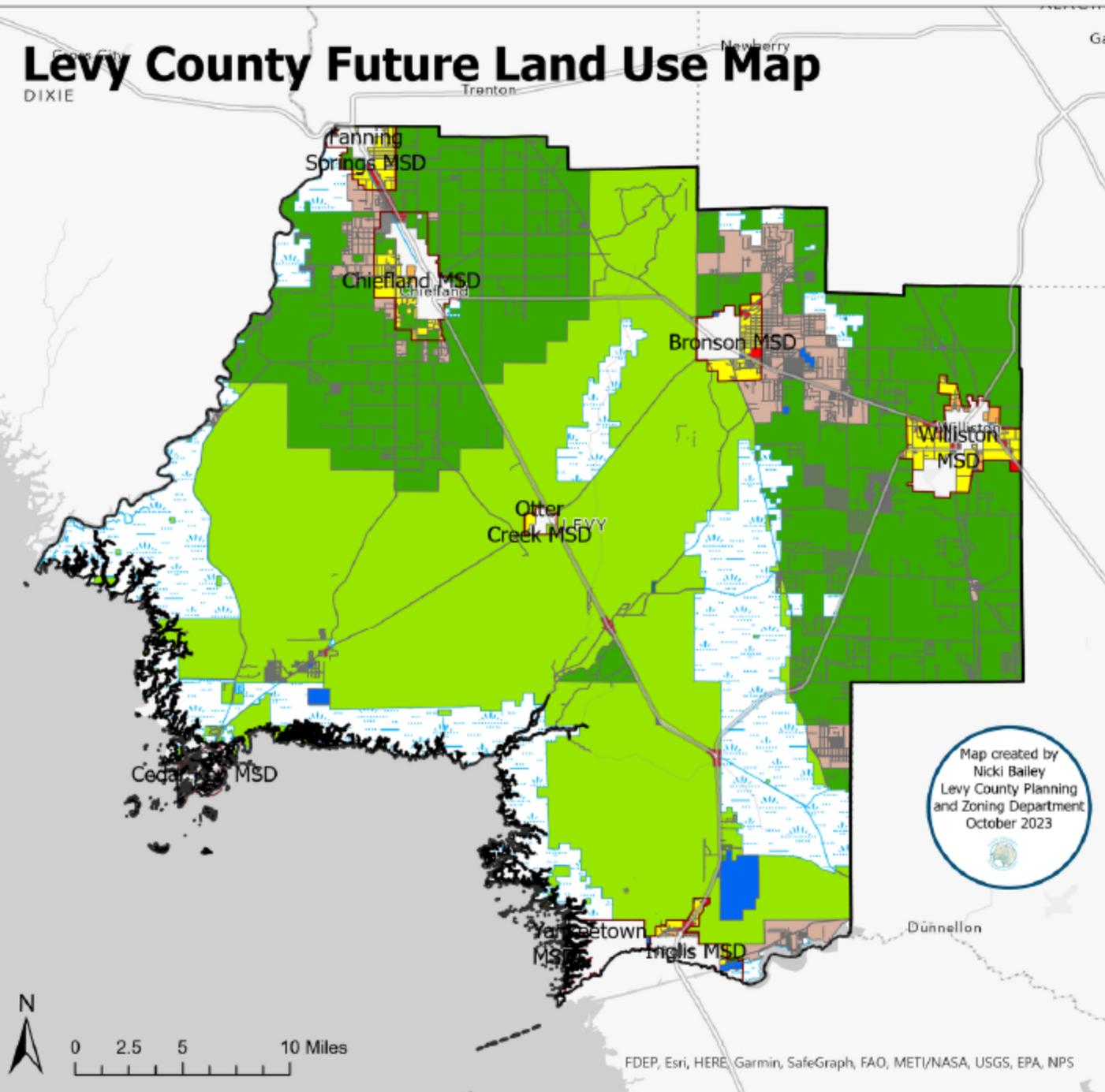
Levy County Future Land Use Map

Legend

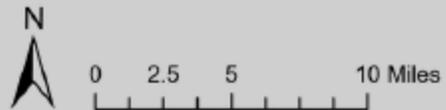
- Levy County Boundary
- Municipal Service Districts

Levy County Future Land Use

- Forestry / Rural Residential
- Agricultural / Rural Residential
- Natural Resources and Conservation
- Rural Residential
- Urban Low Density Residential
- Urban Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public
- Recreation



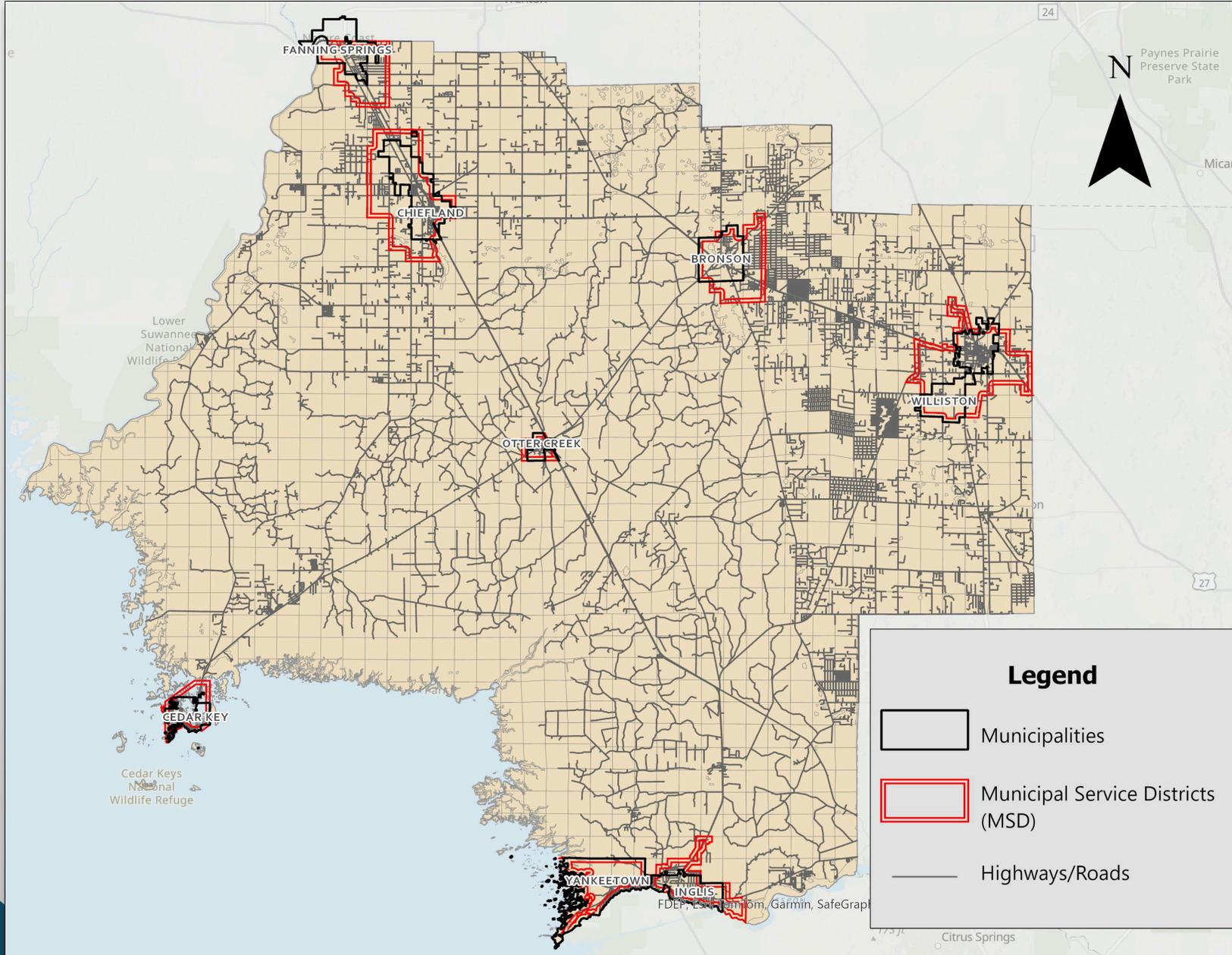
Map created by
Nicki Bailey
Levy County Planning
and Zoning Department
October 2023



FDEP, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS



Municipal Service Districts



Municipal Service District (MSD) is a legal taxing entity already in place in Levy for things like fire/EMS (per \$125.01),



Expanding a Municipal Service District (Policy 11.2)

When Does It Make Sense to Expand an MSD?

- **Support Compact, Efficient Growth**
Extend water/sewer where it can serve logical expansions of the city
Prioritize areas with realistic development pressure and city support
- **Use Infrastructure Wisely**
Build on existing lines and treatment capacity
Focus on corridors and nodes that can be served cost-effectively
- **Align with County & City Vision**
Reinforce shared goals for economic development and housing
Avoid extending utilities into areas intended to remain rural or conserved

MSD vs MSA: What's the Difference?

Municipal Service District (MSD) From Levy County Comp Plan:

- Existing Legal special taxing district under Florida Statutes §125.01(1)(q)
- Funds specific services (e.g., fire, EMS, garbage) in unincorporated areas
- Can levy non-ad valorem assessments or taxes

Municipal Service Areas (MSAs):

- Planning tool used in Comp Plans or Interlocal Agreements
- Identifies where services like sewer are expected to expand
- Guides growth boundaries and infrastructure coordination



Joint Planning Areas vs Municipal Service Areas

Joint Planning Areas (JPAs):

- County-City coordination on annexation and land use
- Shared vision for growth and infrastructure
- Governed by interlocal agreement – comp plan & zoning

Municipal Service Areas (MSAs):

- A delineated area (often unincorporated) that a municipality plans to serve with public infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.) without necessarily annexing.
- Guide capital improvements and grant targeting

Should Levy pursue JPAs, MSAs, or both?



JPA vs MSA: Levy County Planning Framework

Criteria	Joint Planning Area (JPA)	Municipal Service Area (MSA)
Primary Purpose	Coordinate land use, annexation, and infrastructure	Define utility service areas without annexation
Legal Basis	F.S. §163.3177(6)(h) with interlocal agreement	Optional, often via utility master plan
Best Use in Levy	Chiefland, Williston, Bronson	Chiefland (sewer areas only)
Planning Focus	Growth, land use, annexation	Utility infrastructure only
Mapping Requirement	FLU overlay + interlocal map	Infrastructure overlay map
Flexibility	Planning-led, supports rural protection	Utility-led, less influence on land use
Admin Demand	Moderate (needs interlocal agreements)	Low (can follow utility study)
Implementation	GOPs, interlocal agreements	Utility plans or plan appendices
Coordination Strength	High – joint planning decisions	Medium – clarifies service areas
Recommendation	✅ Use as primary tool	✅ Use as supplemental overlay

How Other Florida Counties Coordinate Growth

- **City of Ocoee / Orange County** - Joint planning agreements to manage annexation and future land use around the city limits. ocoee.org
- **Hillsborough County** - Urban service areas and interlocal coordination to guide where city services and higher-intensity uses go and include uniform Level of Service (LOS) standards. [Plan Hillsborough](#)
- **Seminole County** - JPAs around cities to clarify who plans, who serves, and how to handle edge-area development and water/sewer service coordination. [Seminole County Intergovernmental Coordination Element PDF](#)
- **Volusia County** - City-County agreements to align transportation, utilities, and land use along major corridors.. [Volusia County](#)
- **Bay County** - the County explicitly identifies “joint planning areas” and municipal overlays for annexation and infrastructure service areas. [Bay County Chapter 10 – Intergovernmental Coordination PDF](#)

Levy can adapt these tools in a way that fits its rural character, agricultural base, and small-town communities.

Public School Facilities – The Big Picture

Current Utilization vs. Future Wall:

- **Now (2023-24):** The district is at **77.67%** total utilization.
- **The "Wall" (2032-2042):** The district projects hitting **98.19% utilization** by 2032 and maintaining that through 2042 (Levy County Schools Work Plan).
- **The Project Gap:** Explicitly state that the Work Plan shows **Zero "Net New Classrooms"** planned for the next 20 years.
- **Relocatable Usage: 11%** of current students (587 students) are in "portables" (relocatable units). This is a high baseline if they intend to move students into permanent stations.

Note: The current "tightest" school, **Joyce Bullock Elementary** is currently at **82% utilization** (Work Plan Page 2). Example "near-term" where the capacity wall is closest.

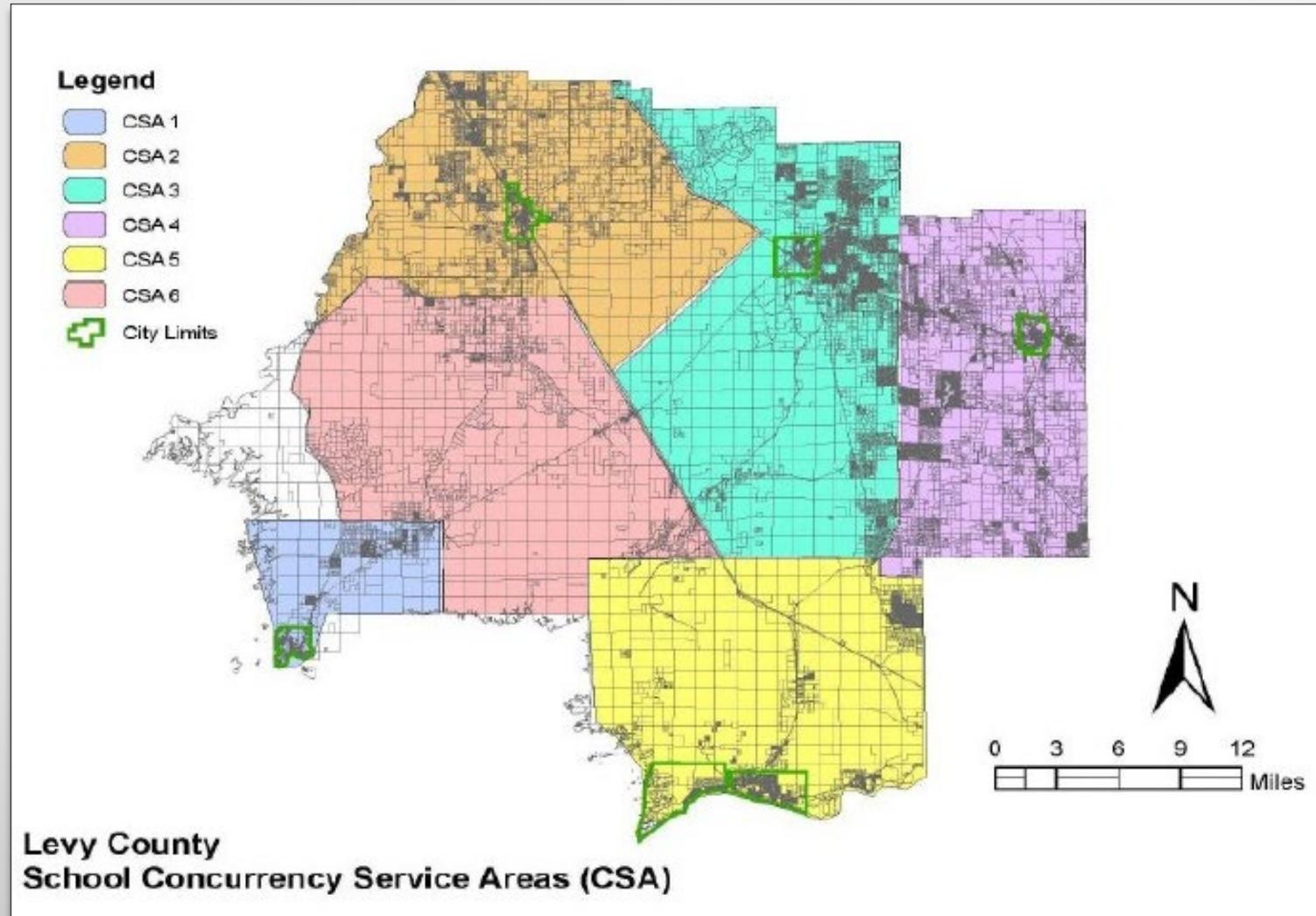


What is School Concurrency?

- A system to ensure school stations are available for new residents *at the time* of development.
- **FISH Capacity:** Florida Inventory of School Houses (Levy uses 100% utilization rate – See Handout A).
- **Level of Service (LOS):** The standard we must maintain to avoid overcrowding.

School Siting Guidelines – FLU Policy 2.4 To be considered in designated commercial land use categories, a proposed school site must be functionally related to surrounding land uses and development, in close proximity to the municipal boundary (city limits), and not in environmentally sensitive areas or flood-prone areas.

Concurrency Service Areas (CSAs)



Key Issue: Cedar Key Schools has limited capacity. PSF Policy 2.3.7 directs overflow students living in CSA 6 to schools in CSAs 2, 3, or 5, depending on available capacity.

Why it Matters

According to the **Levy County School District Work Plan**:

- The district is currently at **~77%** utilization.
- However, they project hitting **98%** by 2032.
- Because the standard is **100%**, the "window" for new growth is closing. Once the district reaches 100% utilization, no new residential development can be approved unless the School Board builds additional permanent classrooms or developers pay to build them.

The Comp Plan allows new housing only if schools have enough **permanent** seats for the students it adds—portables don't count, and schools can't exceed 100% capacity. This ensures growth funds its impact instead of overcrowding classrooms.



Why it Matters

The current Comp Plan policy states that we will approve new housing only if there is a 'permanent' seat in a school building for every child the housing creates. It doesn't count portables, and the County doesn't allow schools to go over 100% of their official building capacity. This ensures that new growth pays for its own impact on our schools, rather than overcrowding existing classrooms

Some counties use a 110% or 120% standard (allowing some overcrowding). By sticking to **100%**, Levy County is taking a "pro-resident/quality of life" stance by saying "full means full."

Proportionate Share Mitigation

If a project causes a school to fail LOS, the developer must help:

- Donate land.
- Construct classrooms.
- Pay for "Student Stations."

Keeps the burden of growth on the development, not existing taxpayers.

Key Takeaways

- **JPAs as the Primary Fix:** Joint Planning Areas (JPAs) are the most effective tool to ensure that when a City annexes land for housing, the County and School Board are at the table to plan for the new students.
- **The 2032 Capacity Wall:** The District projects hitting **98% utilization** in less than 10 years. With **zero** new classrooms planned, the County's 2050 growth hinges on developers funding new capacity.
- **"Full Means Full":** By keeping the **100% FISH standard** (and excluding portables), Levy County is prioritizing resident quality of life over uncontrolled sprawl.
- **Bridging the Consistency Gap:** This update will turn the current "Inconsistent" status between the County and School Board into a unified 2050 roadmap.
- **Next Steps:** Use today's feedback to help draft any **Interlocal Agreement** templates.

THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?

